

Milford Jail
Milford, Pennsylvania
Pike Co.

HABS No. Pa. 221

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52-MILF

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Reduced Copies of Measured Drawings

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA
DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

Historic American Buildings Survey
Ralph W. Lear, District Officer
311-312 Dime Bank Building
Wilkes-Barre, Penna.

MILFORD JAIL
Milford, Pike County, Pennsylvania

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Custodian

Sheriff of Pike County. Owner, Pike County.

Date of Erection

Built 1814, by Daniel Dimmick

Present Condition

Very good, well preserved, and much care is taken in keeping it in excellent condition. Occupied, and still used as a jail.

Number of Stories

Two stories, a basement and an attic.

Materials of Construction

Built of cobble stones, several years ago, cement added to keep it preserved. Slate roof, small barred windows, shuttered on side where living quarters are. Heavy barred doors on cells.

MILFORD JAIL
Milford, Pike County, Pennsylvania.

In one of the most beautifully located towns in Pennsylvania, is the old stone court house of Milford. It is one of the most picturesque buildings of its kind and is the second oldest court house in Pennsylvania. It was built by Daniel Dimmick in 1814 of cobble stones picked up in the adjacent fields of the village. Several years ago, cement was added to preserve it.

In 1871, the great increase in population made it necessary to change this building to the County Jail by which name it is now known and for which purpose it is now used. The present Court House is across the street from the original site.

The building has two stories, a basement and an attic, and on top of the building is a cupola. One hundred and twenty years ago, George Biddis, a son of the founder of Milford made a wooden effigy of a giant trout to surmount the belfry of the old court house as a weather vane. This carving was taken down two years ago. It had been painted only once, and had become so weather beaten and worn looking, that it was decided to replace it. The fish was carved out of a stick of white pine, 6 foot, 2 inches long. It now hangs in the Pike County Historical Society.

The bell was placed in 1844. Before that, a triangle was used to call the assembly at the Court House, and previous to that, the sheriff would mount the cupola and blow three long blasts on a tin horn. This bell was later transferred to the present Court House.

In the cell room on the second floor, is a cell block of three cells, each being 8 x 10 with a corridor around the entire cell block. These are used for the men. On the first floor, is the women's cell.

There is only one small, barred high window, and a large heavy barred cell door. All the cells have the same kind of doors, with the original door latches, and all the windows are barred on the southeast side of the building. The north west side is given over to living quarters for the sheriff and his family. These windows are all shuttered. There is one other cell on the ground floor, which is being repaired and will be made ready for juvenile cases. There is a one story wing on the rear of the building, which is used for transient cases. A coal shed, also in the rear is original. The present roof is laid over the original wood shingled roof.

The only sheriff who was ever compelled to execute a man in this jail, died in April, 1936. The man was hanged. The rope was attached to the roof rafter and around the man's neck, then he was suspended through a trap door on the second floor and dropped to the first floor.

This building is Early American Colonial in design, and is of state-wide fame, beauty, and antiquity. It is in excellent condition, and is being well preserved.

Historic Material obtained from Pike County Historical Society's collection of newspaper clippings.

Author.....

Approved.....

May 1936.

Reviewed Aug 19, 1936 T.W.